



## General Government & Social Services Committee

September 6, 2022

### Summary and Motions

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Committee chair, Council Member Susan Lamb, called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Committee members Vice Mayor Steve Kay and Council Members Richard Moloney, James Brown, Fred Brown, Whitney Baxter, Hannah LeGris, Liz Sheehan, and Jennifer Reynolds attended the meeting.

#### **I. Approval of August 16, 2022 Committee Summary**

A motion by Liz Sheehan to approve August 16, 2022 Committee Summary, seconded by Whitney Baxter, the motion passed without dissent.

#### **II. Office of Homelessness Prevention and Intervention Annual Update**

Council Member Sheehan introduced the item and thanked Jeff Herron, LFUCG's new Homelessness Prevention Manager. Herron reviewed the history of the Office of Homelessness Prevention and Intervention (OHPI) and explained that the office formed as a result of the 2013 Greater Good Report. The report had 44 recommendations, 31 of which have been completed and closed. An additional 11 have been completed and are ongoing. Two of the recommendations have been deferred and passed along to advocacy groups.

LFUCG has invested roughly \$37.5 million in the homelessness response system since the office was created in 2014. This number only counts funds that were administered, monitored, and led by the office. About one-third of the funding has gone towards managing homelessness. Herron said that ideally, the goal would be to shift that ratio so that there are four permanent housing solutions for every one emergency shelter bed that LFUCG funds.

LFUCG has accomplished a variety of goals as a result of to the \$37 million investment. In 2019, LFUCG received the designation of effectively ending veteran homelessness. They have also built a Coordinated Entry system and has been designated a Homeless Management information System (HMIS) Lead. OHPI also has about 50 new programs and have coordinated a comprehensive, effective response to a historic pandemic. The office increased its Continuum of Care Partners from 16 to 75 diverse organization. The office increased its federal funding by 35%.

Herron explained the Point-In-Time (PIT) Count data, and though there was a slight increase in the 2022 PIT Count, they have seen a 54% decrease in the number of homeless persons in their system since 2014. In January 2021, OPHI released its five-year strategic plan to reduce and effectively end homelessness and enhance affordable housing in Fayette County (2021-2025). There are 55 recommendations/actions in this plan. The overarching goals for the strategic plan include: Community outreach and engagement, preventing homelessness, policy and advocacy, funding sources, and expanding permanent supportive housing. Herron shared further progress on the strategic plan.

They had a successful public education campaign to help increase awareness of Continuum of Care. They have a partnership with Untold Creations and have now entered into a second contract with them. In progress items include creating a centralized public education campaign, expand access and use of public data interface and establish onboarding curriculum for case managers. The next priorities include establishing a homeless preference for HUD public housing vouchers and moving on strategies, eviction

diversion and mediation pilot program, enhance use of Lex End Homelessness Fund, leverage Chamber of Commerce support, and engage local lawmakers.

Moloney asked how much money OHPI receives for the Continuum of Care. Herron said they get about \$2 million, but it varies from year to year. Moloney expressed concern for being in violation of HUD regulations. Herron said that the concern is that the members of the Homeless Prevention and Intervention (HPI) Board and the Continuum of Care Board are both appointed by the mayor. The HUD regulation is that members of the Continuum of Care Board need to be nominated by the membership. They are currently exploring two strategies. One is to have a process by which the membership vets the applicants which are then appointed by the mayor. The second is they could possibly expand the board to have additional members to the board that would be nominated and voted on by the membership. They would then serve in addition to the other board members. Herron said there isn't a firm deadline when this needs to occur. The office is currently working on two grants and is hoping by year's end they will have identified the best solution.

Kay asked about the chart that depicted the decline of homelessness over the years. He asked for clarification on how these numbers are found. Herron said the data is from the PIT Count, which gives a snapshot of what homelessness looks like in any given night. It incorporates those in transitional housing, those who are unsheltered, and those who are in emergency shelter. Kay asked what the breakdown was between the categories and asked what strategies have been used to decrease the number. There were roughly 715 experiencing homelessness in any given night in Lexington. He will provide additional information for the sheltered versus unsheltered homelessness. There were 32 who were unsheltered. Herron shared the biggest factor for the reduction in homelessness is the adoption of the housing first model.

Reynolds expressed concern with unhoused individuals in downtown and their impact on property/other people downtown. Herron said this is something to which his office is devoting as much attention as possible. Sometimes these individuals are not unhoused, but rather considered street-involved. They have resumed cross-functional team meetings, which incorporate individuals from outside the housing realm to assist in addressing the issue. They are hoping to increase efficiency of street outreach and continue to bring in partners. They are also working with GIS to allow for public reporting of housing encampments. However, if there is any threat of harm, that issue needs to be directed to law enforcement.

LeGris expressed interest in learning more about the public education campaign and local lawmaker involvement. She asked about the elements of a successful campaign and what they can do as local lawmakers. Herron looks forward to finding mechanisms for Council Members and their constituents to be more involved in the conversations. He invited Council Members to contact his office to provide additional information on how they can support the work of OHPI.

J. Brown asked how Council can support Herron in this role. Herron said that compassion and those wanting to help are important. However, sometimes the appropriate response is to contact law enforcement when it pertains to criminal activity. Kay emphasized there is a distinction between street-involved individuals and those who are homeless.

### III. Percent for Art Resolution

F. Brown introduced the item and shared he had concerns regarding how “capital projects” is defined. Heather Lyons, LFUCG’s Director of Arts and Cultural Affairs, gave background information on the Percent for Art Resolution. The Public Arts Commission (PAC) was created in 2002 by LFUCG. In 2004, the Urban County Art Review Board was Board (UCARB) was established for the purpose of reviewing and advising on proposals for permanent visual art work in public spaces. In 2018, the Percent for Art Resolution was passed by the Urban County Council, which required 1% of all bonds for capital improvement projects be set aside for the purchase, commissioning, installation, and maintenance of public art. In 2019, a commission convened to create a Public Art Master Plan for Lexington. In February of 2022, the master plan was complete and presented to Council.

The Finance Department interprets the resolution to mean that the “total amount of bonded projects is included in the calculation.” The 1% is calculated from the total bond and set up as an individual project. For the most recent bond in FY23, three projects make over 60% of the total bond issuance. This included the detention center roof, paving and fire vehicle purchases. In FY22, 77% of the total bond issuance was made up from paving, fire vehicles and police vehicles. Often the city bonds do not come from site specific bonds. Currently, the Percent for Art fund has \$470,020 from FY23 and \$282,992 from FY22. The use of all capital funds to calculate the 1% for art. If all capital funds were not taken consideration, there would not be an appropriate amount of funds to support a Public Art program.

The Public Art Master plan identifies specific processes that ensure public engagement and transparency. This includes presenting an annual work plan to Council, presenting all contractual and financial commitments for each project to Council for approval, and live televising all PAC meetings. Additionally they will engage local stakeholders to identify projects and determine sites. They will also publicly announce projects and calls for entry and have a competitive process with RFQ’s and RFP’s.

Lyons reviewed the language of the Percent for Art Resolution. She proposed a change to the resolution in order to address the site specific concerns. She suggested that section two of the resolution to be clarified to read the “amount equal to 1% of the funds budgeted for projects costing \$10 million or more be designated for the purchase, commissioning, installation and maintenance of public art in, at, or on the project site to the extent one exists, IF an appropriate location, that is free and accessible to the public, is available at that site.”

Public comment was opened. Dottie Bean from District 8 expressed opposition to this fund.

F. Brown asked the Commissioner of Finance, Erin Hensley, if the funds available were in a restricted fund. Hensley said that, on top of the original bond amount, they have added 1% of the cost of the total bond. For each fiscal year, the associated amount is in a project fund in its respective bond fund. F. Brown wanted additional information about what other cities are doing with regard to public art. He also expressed support for the transparency. He believes the intention of the Council in 2018 was not to add 1% of the total bond package.

Bledsoe agreed with F. Brown in terms of the interpretation of Council’s decision in 2018. She remembers the conversation started because of conversations surrounding the new city hall. She thought it was capital improvements for capital buildings that LFUCG owned or was going to build. Lyons said that these dollars would be for city owned property or buildings. Bledsoe has concerns about adding art into the bond package, but believes that other funding options could be identified.

Moloney echoed his colleagues' sentiments. Lyons said that often large projects take commitment and if the investment is reduced, the projects left will not be permanent and will have limited impact. She emphasized that the initial investment is important. J. Brown said the original conversation was to use the Percent for Art as a way to get public art started. He believes they should stay the course, see where it goes and revisit this later if needed.

LeGris expressed support for public art and shared that it can impact revenue, tourism and quality of life. Reynolds said that it is common to use 1% of a budget or bonding package for public art. She doesn't believe that what LFUCG is doing is out of the norm and supports continuing with the current funding structure. Lyon's referenced several important works that exist in Lexington and this investment in art will serve the community for years to come.

Kay clarified the conversation. The proposal before the Council is not about the 1% but to consider a resolution to allow public art to be located somewhere even when the funding does not come from a place. Kay supports this change. He also shared that if there is an issue about the 1% and where the money comes from, that needs to be placed into committee but that is not the current discussion.

Moloney expressed concern about bonding the maintenance. He asked if they were allowed to bond ongoing expenses. Hensley said that when the bond is issued, that is supposed to be for a capital project. Maintenance would not be something they want to include in a bond. Additionally, she said there are some ambiguities in the ordinance that need attention.

F. Brown asked about the resolution change and if they are voting on this change. Lyons said she was not putting forth a resolution change but a suggestion for a change to inform their discussion. F. Brown said he wanted to defer this to the next committee meeting.

Bledsoe said that they should readdress and/or clean-up the language of the resolution. Additionally she requested that Commissioner Hensley be involved in those discussions. Evan Thompson with the Department of Law said he can help clear-up the ambiguity.

Lamb asked for a special GGSS meeting in October on October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022 at 1:00 PM. There was a brief discussion and the Committee supported it.

#### **IV. Items Referred to Committee**

Sheehan asked that the OHPI Annual Report be moved to annual items on the referral list.

A motion by Liz Sheehan to adjourn at 2:49 PM, seconded by Whitney Baxter, the motion passed without dissent.

Meeting materials: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rqWTA3xzJvqZ\\_kPHySY1UHXNAhj9pnP2/view?usp=drive\\_open](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rqWTA3xzJvqZ_kPHySY1UHXNAhj9pnP2/view?usp=drive_open)

Recording of the meeting:

[https://lfucg.granicus.com/player/clip/5637?view\\_id=4&redirect=true&h=bab36d4442513c0bf0a84b63779e5ea6](https://lfucg.granicus.com/player/clip/5637?view_id=4&redirect=true&h=bab36d4442513c0bf0a84b63779e5ea6)

JDS 10/18/2022